# 00749

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PRIVACY CHANNEL ~~TOP SECRET~~/SENSITIVE April 11, 1970

ACTION: THE WHITE HOUSE 007

EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER FROM BUNKER

REF: WHS 0018

1. I have read with much interest your telegraphic account of your meeting with Michael, Yul and Nestor on April 4 and am most anxious to see the full report. In the meantime, as I have done previously, I shall inform Thieu of the substance of what transpired at the meeting.

2. In reading the account of the last meeting, and reflecting on the other two, it seems to me clear that they have been worthwhile. You have laid out for them in considerable detail and quite clearly what we are prepared to do both in regard to withdrawal of non-South Vietnamese forces, and in the principles of a political settlement as well as the flexibility inherent in our approach. At the same time, you have been definite about the limits beyond which we cannot go, e. g., in the replacement of Thieu/Ky/Khiem.

3. The fact that Michael stayed on in Paris for these talks seems to me an indication of a growing desire by the other side to see some progress in negotiations. A recent statement by Nugroho, the Indonesian Ambassador in Hanoi, a highly intelligent observer, that there is a growing sense of frustration there at the lack of progress in South Viet-Nam as well as similar reports from other sources would

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seem to be further indications confirming this view.

4. While they reject the principle of mutual withdrawal, it seems to me that in fact they are in accord that their forces must be withdrawn when they say that they are prepared to discuss their withdrawal after political and military issues have been agreed to.

5. Although another date has not been set for a meeting, they indicate they wish to continue contacts.

6. Thus while I think there has been some useful progress, I believe it is also clear that the other side is not yet ready to come to grips with the gut issues. I think this is to be expected in view of the fact of their lack of progress in South Viet-Nam and the new problem with which they are faced by the developments in Cambodia. It seems reasonable to expect that they would want to reappraise their position in the light of these developments and I would think that Michael's return to Hanoi is an indication of this. We ought to bear in mind, however, that while they are not yet ready to move, when they make up their mind to do so, they can act very quickly. This they demonstrated in October 1968 and I anticipate it may happen again.

7. These are, of course, very preliminary views and I shall be giving it more thought.

BUNKER

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